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serving Easter, the numbers of the lunar cycle were inserted in the calendar; and on account of their singular use, they were set in letters of gold. Hence the year of the cycle for any year was called the *golden number* for that year. According to this cycle, on whatever days the new and full moons fall this year, they will fall on the same days of the months, 19 years hence.—Therefore as Easter day falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon succeeding the 21st of March, this cycle assists us in calculating beforehand the time of that festival.

#### *Dionysian Period.*

This arises from the cycles of the sun and moon multiplied into one another, forming a period of 532 years. After this period, the new and full moons return to the same days of the month, and the days of the month to the same days of the week; of course, the dominical letters and moveable feasts return again in the same order. Hence this cycle is called the great *Paschal* cycle.

*The Cycle of Indiction* is one arbitrary period of 15 years, in use among the Romans.

#### *The great Julian Period*

is a period of 7980 years formed by a multiplication of the cycle of the sun, the cycle of the moon, and the Romish indiction. This period began 764 years before the creation, and is not yet completed. Of course, it comprehends all cycles and periods, since the beginning of time. As there is but one year in the whole period that has the same number for the three cycles of which it is formed, had historians noted the cycles of each year, there could have been, no dispute among chronologers, as to the time of any event.

#### *The Epact.*

The time measured by 12 revolutions of the moon from the sun to the sun again is called the *Lunar* year; and is 10 days, 21 hours and 21 seconds shorter than the solar year. This leads to a calculation of the moon's age, on the 1st of January, which is termed the *Epact*.

A full account of the calculations

which these cycles involve is to be met with in almost all books of astronomy. A.Z.

January 1, 1810.

*For the Belfust Monthly Magazine.*

#### ON LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

ST. LUKE's hospital for the insane, which is situated a little without this city, is the noblest establishment of the kind in Great Britain. It has been most liberally endowed by private contributions, and certainly the internal economy does ample justice to its humane benefactors. In visiting St. Luke's, which at present contains 300 Lunatics, a stranger cannot avoid feeling a degree of surprise mixed with satisfaction at the order and regularity of the house. Instead of the wild and clamorous ravings, which generally assail the ears, from a few Lunatics confined in country work-houses or prisons, I have been at this hospital, and heard not a single word that bespoke a disordered mind. I will therefore endeavour to give some particulars of this admirable management; and afterwards we shall be more prepared to notice and compare the peculiarities of other Lunatic Asylums, public or private, which I have visited. From such a comparison, it is presumed, some little interest will be excited, and perhaps a ray of light afforded to those, who are gifted with genius, capable of combining the particular experience of others, towards the promotion of farther usefulness.

The building is long and narrow, 493 feet by 30 in the centre, with broader wings of 66 feet, projecting from front and rear—a construction well adapted for the formation of galleries.\* The centre of the house is intended for the master's accommodation, for offices, &c. Lotty iron gates, reaching to the ceiling, defend this part, on each side from the galleries. There are seven of these, each of which contains 32 single rooms, ten feet six inches, by eight feet—two rooms with four beds in each, 18 feet 4 inches, by 9 feet 9 inches: a sitting

\* There are four floors including the basement.

room 28 feet by 13 feet—a smaller sitting room for refractory patients, 10 feet 6 inches, by 8 feet—and a servant's room, about 17 feet square.\* The length of the longest gallery is 120 feet, the breadth 15 feet in all. The cells are opposite each other, for the length of 30 feet, and they open into the galleries. Each cell is 13 feet 3 inches high, arched, boarded and wainscoted—a window opening outward to each, of a semicircular form, 8 or 9 feet from the floor—and a large aperture over the door, with inside wire lattice to the iron bars to prevent accidents, and no shutter over the door. The bed is opposite to the door, under the window, which opens outward. The partition and outer walls form the head and one side of the box. Two upright pieces of very thick wood, about 14 inches high, are fastened together, for the other side and foot, to complete the rectangle, which is firmly fixed in its place. The dimensions of this box are 6 feet by 3 feet. Upon the floor, within this strong box, lies a false bottom, rising at the head of the bed, several inches higher than at the foot, and descending with a concave declivity, as much as possible to confine the Lunatic to the middle of the bed. In every one of these false bottoms, at the foot of the bed, a groove is made, underneath, which opens by a square aperture in the side of the box, opposite to the door, and runs across as far as the outer wall, to admit a trough for the purpose of receiving the moisture, through small holes, in the foot of the false bottom, opening downward into the trough. It is to be understood that the trough is only necessary for those who are denominated the wet patients, who unconsciously, or through indolence, refuse to second the calls of nature. In some of the boxes a ring is fixed at each side, and at the foot, to which strong leather straps are attached, in order to restrain the unruly, by securing the arms, between the shoulder and elbow, and the feet, round the ankles.

\* Vide report from Select Committee of the House of Commons.

For the wet patients, it will be obvious to every one, that straw is the fittest article for bedding, because it can so easily be changed, and readily admits any moisture to pass through. The number of such patients is however very small in comparison of the rest, who sleep also upon straw; but they have good blankets underneath the body.

It has been already observed that in each gallery there are two rooms with four beds in each for convalescents. These are common bedsteads, raised from the floor, in the usual way, with good feather beds large enough to hold a single person. They are without tester or curtains. The shorter gallery in the wing of the building, which forms an angle with the longer one, without any partition between them, is occupied by the more unruly and wet patients. There is a long form fixed against the wall in this part of the house, near the window which gives light to the gallery; and iron rings may be observed at certain distances on the wall, for the purpose of giving attachment to leathern straps or iron locks for the arms, that the furious Lunatic may be confined during the day, in a *sitting posture*. Forms are also placed round the smaller sitting room, intended as a day room for this description of patients, with similar means of coercion; and here and there a short chain is fixed in the floor, immediately below the rings, which are above the form, to confine the legs, when it may be necessary.

So that you may see perhaps three or four in each gallery to whose different degrees of fury the adequate force is applied, from the simple strait waistcoat, and single strap to manacles and fetters. I may here observe, though it is rather out of place, that a degree of restraint beyond the necessary force, is exceedingly hurtful and irritating to their feelings. They are often very sensible of the necessity for coercion; and a fear (arising from feelings of honour, I know not whether I should say peculiar to the insane) lest they should suffer the indignity of being classed with the most violent of their com-

panions, whose follies they are ready enough to observe and criticise, unconscious frequently of their own, will be very likely to prevent any alarming extravagance in their behaviour. But, as they appear sensible of this necessity, provided their exertions be met even by the *appearance* of superior force on the part of their keepers, little or no resistance is made to the usual mode of coercion.

The privies or vaults are at the end of the lower galleries, water runs below, and they are generally kept clear above. To defend from accidents, iron bars run across, a few feet below the seat, and the internal part is lined with lead—a good contrivance to prevent the smell from being retained, as well as to prevent the bad effects of moisture in such a building. The iron grating turns on a pivot, and, two or three times a week, it is turned round to precipitate the adhering feculent matter into the water below.

In each of the sitting rooms, which are also used as dining rooms, there is a fire place, with the defence of an iron grating of strong bars two or three inches apart, which keeps them from approaching near enough the fire to do any mischief. The grating is more than six feet high, and at the top projects towards the wall over the chimney piece. By means of a small gate in the front which is kept locked, the fire is occasionally supplied with fuel, &c. It is found necessary to have this grated defence, moved to the distance of some feet from the fire, as the Lunatics have various schemes to thrust in substances to the grate, for amusement or mischief, by which means the house might be in danger of being burnt. They will sometimes tear off a long slip of wood from the form or wainscot, and thus they contrive to toast their bread, which appears to be a favourite occupation.

The patients are obliged to rise with the utmost regularity, in summer at seven, in winter at eight o'clock in the morning, all except the very worst who are unfit to be moved; at eight in the evening they

go to bed. At regular hours also they get their meals of breakfast, dinner and supper. Some, who are allowed a little money by their friends, indulge in the luxury of tea.

It is well known that indolence strongly characterises the Lunatic. Therefore punctuality in every thing is of the most serious importance; and the habits of regularity which they are thus taught to acquire cannot but contribute materially to their recovery. When the bell rings, they are few who do not obey the call; for they know, that, if some little indulgence was granted them before, in consequence of a more governed behaviour, one single act of disobedience may subject them to solitary confinement, to the indignity of a public exposure to their companions, or to the retraction of that indulgence. Thus has the providence of God, in this humbled state of the human faculties, not only left behind those feelings which powerfully operate towards the self importance and happiness of the insane, for they are in fancy emperors and prophets—but has likewise exalted them to a higher degree of sensibility, so that a foundation is, as it were, laid for recovery upon the refinement of those feelings, which under a wise management must necessarily tend to awaken some degree of reason.

Their meals are provided in the day rooms of each gallery, from the general kitchen. The patients of one gallery feed together, except those who cannot be moved. In general they conduct themselves with the greatest order and propriety at meals. They eat out of wooden bowls, or off pewter plates. No knives or forks are allowed under any pretence whatever. It is even dangerous to permit them the use of tin vessels. The master of St. Luke's showed me a very sharp instrument, in the shape of a knife, which, for the purpose of destroying himself, a Lunatic had formed out of a tin vessel, when such were in use some time ago. He had actually made the attempt with it, and in a shocking manner

had wounded his throat, but not mortally. On which account they are made to use their fingers.

For breakfast they have water gruel, with bread, butter and salt. Four days in the week they have meat to dinner, mutton, beef or veal, and sometimes pork, with the best table beer. Broth on the other days. For supper they are provided with bread and cheese, or bread and butter with beer, and a large allowance on the days when their dinner consists of broth. When they refuse to eat, which they sometimes do, and then the breath acquires a high degree of fætor, the mouth is kept open by the ring of a key, while some nourishing liquid is poured into the throat. If it should be rejected, the *spouting boat* is used. This is an instrument like a common silver butter boat, with a long spout to it. The spout is introduced into the mouth, and the nostrils are cautiously held, in such a manner that the Lunatic is forced to swallow. I am at a loss to know why a late writer should have given this instrument the name of a *destructive devilish engine*.<sup>\*</sup> It certainly may be abused, but in judicious hands may be of most essential use.

After breakfast each day they associate together in the day rooms, and in winter are very fond of crowding about the fire—or, some choose to remain in their cells, whilst others walk backwards and forwards in the galleries. There is a communication by a stone staircase between all the floors, which are four in number, including the basement, on each side of the house, to permit ready access for the patients to the vaults—but iron gates, as before observed, prevent all communication whatever between the sexes, as they are confined in opposite ends of the hospital.

When they have left their cells in the morning, the shutter is opened from the semicircular grated window above the bed. The bed is made, and the door is left open to produce a thorough circulation of air. The convalescent patients lend so much

assistance in these necessary offices, as materially to diminish the labour of the keeper. I shall have to notice the proper employment of convalescents hereafter. There is one keeper appointed to superintend each gallery, with the care of about 40 patients. Men-keepers for the males, and women keepers for the females. The keepers are obliged to use the utmost caution in every thing they do; and always to exercise a watchful attention. I once saw great consternation in the hospital, when one of the keepers had accidentally laid down his key: but it was soon missing. Some of the Lunatics had spied it, and dexterously secreted it. The strictest search was made. But promises, threats and intreaties were alike ineffectual to procure its restoration, and before evening they were obliged to change all the locks on that side of the house, otherwise the hospital might have been discharged of half its inmates before morning. Their cunning is wonderful, and therefore suspicion must never lie asleep, even when the design appears most innocent.

In summer, when the weather is fine, they are allowed to amuse themselves in the open air, in yards, or airing grounds well secured with high walls. There is a separate area for the male and female patients.

Every saturday the patients are well combed and cleaned; an operation which, however unwillingly, they must submit to. On Sunday it is very common for some of them to read to the rest, and I have watched with great satisfaction, how eagerly they have crowded about their companion, and listened to different parts of the liturgy. Howard observed of St. Luke's that it wanted a chapel, and I cannot but think that even the form of worship would be of great use to many of the Lunatics.

On other days of the week, some may be seen knitting, others sewing, mending stockings, &c. It is more difficult to find proper employment for the men, than for the women; and, certainly, when Lunatics are competent to it, some kind of work ought always to be provided. There are baths for the use of the patients.

I omit any consideration of the af-

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<sup>\*</sup> See Haslam on Insanity.

fairs of this hospital as far as they relate to its governors, committees, &c. My object is only with the treatment of the insane. In my next communication I hope to make some comparison between this hospital and some others upon the different heads which I have already noticed.

*London.*

THOS. HANCOCK.

*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

A respectable linen draper of this town, handed to us the annexed report, which he lately found among some old papers. It is to be regretted that no further procedure was had on the business at that time. Now, when from the high price of linens there is a danger of the manufacture being nearly lost to this country, we have every inducement by the abridgement of labour and by improved machinery to seek to bring the article to market on lower terms. The introduction of new and improved machinery in its various branches, has greatly facilitated the progress of the cotton manufacture, while the machinery employed in the linen trade has been nearly stationary. Under these circumstances we strongly recommend to the linen drapers of the North of Ireland, to enter into a subscription to remunerate the proprietor of the discovery, that the invention may be thrown open to the public. By such a procedure we think the linen trade of Ireland would be most materially benefited in the present crisis.

*Report on the Petition of Thomas McCabe and William Pearsee. Reported to the Irish House of Commons, 14th February, 1791, by the Right Hon. John O'Neil.*

MR. SPEAKER,

Your committee appointed to examine the matter of the petition of Thomas McCabe and William Pearsee, having met according to order, and examined several witnesses relative to the subject-matter of the said petition, directed me to report as follows:

Mr. John Kelsey, an inspector of linens in the county of Antrim, informed your committee, that in December last, Mr. McCabe called on him to look at two webs in a new con-

structed loom; that he examined the cloth, found the fabric good and well executed; that he afterwards saw a man weaving in it through a small opening in a door, and on examining the linen he wove, it appeared to be as good as that he first examined; that he conceives the weaving was more expeditiously performed by this than by a common loom, in as much as there were two webs weaving at the same time, and the operation of each of those was faster than that of one in the common mode; that the selvages of those webs were very well executed, and a good selvage is generally the test of good cloth; that the weaver appeared to him to weave with less labour than in the common mode, as he sat in an erect posture; the quality of the linen he saw wove was about that of a sixteen hundred. Says that he apprehends the use of this machine would be an improvement to the linen manufacture.

Mr. Pearsee, one of the petitioners, and the person whom Mr. Kelsey saw weaving, says, that he is not by profession a weaver; that he wove calico, linen and cheque in this loom; that he believes he worked twenty-three yards of a calico in a day in it; that he understands eight yards of calico is a fair day's work, and two yards and a half of linen; that he is convinced he could on this loom work double the quantity of linen that could be wove in a common loom, and that an experienced weaver could certainly weave much faster than he could.

Your committee then called upon Mr. Thomas Russel, who informed them that he saw the piece of linen which Pearsee wove, and compared it with a pattern piece of Mr. Sinclair's of Belfast, and the selvage of Pearsee's was by much the best; he also said that he had received a letter from Mr. Digges, stating that six of the principal linen-draper of the neighbourhood of Belfast had examined a piece of linen of Pearsee's weaving, and compared it with one of Mr. Sinclair's, and they were of opinion Pearsee's was equal in quality, if not superior, to any they ever had seen.

They then called upon Mr. John Russel, who has been for many years